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DOUGHBOYS ON THE RHINE DO HONOR TO NATION  
Officers and Men Eager to Stay Offer Many Reasons Urging Idea

These photographs of our troops on the Rhine, never before published, give a fine idea of the high efficiency of the Army of Occupation. At the left is a detachment on a practice march, and at the right is a scene at mess time during manoeuvres. Below is a recent picture of Major-Gen. Henry T. Allen, who has brought the force almost to perfection, reviewing some of his troops.



## Discipline of the Highest, Morale Ideal, and Presence of Our Troops Is Adding Prestige Daily to United States

ALREADY a detachment of troops from the Army of Occupation in the Rhineland has returned to America and will not be replaced. To learn how the men themselves feel about leaving Germany and what the Germans think about the withdrawal of all our troops The New York Herald sent a member of its Paris Bureau to investigate at first hand. The accompanying article completely covers these important angles, and its deductions are both timely and interesting.

Special Correspondence to THE NEW YORK HERALD.  
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By LAURENCE HILLS.

DAMOCLES may have had his rest disturbed by the constant reminder of a thread-slung sword dangling over his head, but his plight was less deserving of sympathy than that of any of Uncle Sam's 10,000 odd olive-drab clad soldiers in the Coblenz bridgehead. For while Damocles probably deserved the punishment old Dionysius meted out to him, any one who tries to convince the American troops of occupation along the Rhine that he should be compelled to face the loss of all his regal pleasures, his comforts and the fellowship which he considers far beyond anything likely to be found in musty barrack buildings on the other side of the Atlantic will find that he has an almost impossible task.

True, it is known that the Rhineland force is to be cut down to about 7,000 officers and men, but it is still uncertain just who is to go and who is to remain until the powers in Washington decide to take an other slice. As a result of this continual indecision, all ranks from buck privates to top sergeants, and even up into the majestic glories of staff officers, are losing sleep, and if their own statements are to be taken at face value, it is not uncommon for them to awaken while repeating the now well-known formula.

"No, sir, I don't want to go home. I'm all right here and think we all ought to stay. Besides, ask the Germans themselves and see what they say."

## Logic of Rhineland Boys

**Appears Exceptionally Strong**  
A correspondent of THE NEW YORK HERALD, who has just completed an extensive tour of the American zone, can readily appreciate the American soldier's viewpoint, and while the perspective of the boys along the Rhine may not be quite as fully developed as that of the administrators in Washington, the Rhineland logic is exceptionally strong and should be given full consideration before America's advanced line is withdrawn somewhere behind the Alleghanies.

The general impression along the Rhine is that that same estimable group of old women, who four years ago were singing that they "didn't raise their boys to be soldiers," now are spending their time worrying about what the Rhine troops are doing with the millions of marks per annum which energetic reporters have told the United States is the allotment of each and every American in the Coblenz area.

With the dollar bringing anywhere from 250 to 300 marks, and champagne obtainable at say 15 cents a bottle, while

the best of Rhine or Moselle vintages cost no more than 6 or 7 cents a bottle, these estimable old women naturally picture the Rhineland contingent as indignantly refusing a cup of good coffee and rolling around the streets—at least those unfrequented by military police—in a frightfully drunken condition. And, of course, once this idea has taken root Congressmen are flooded with eloquent appeals that "our glorious heroes must not be subjected to such temptations."

"Perhaps the kickers back home would spend their money that way if they got a chance, but every one up here has a bigger idea of life than that," one Motor Transport Sergeant told THE HERALD's investigator. "We know how to get better value for our money, and that doesn't mean that we spend our time running from one money changer to another trying to win a few marks by speculation, either."

And apparently this Sergeant's words were true, for although there is no dearth of soldiers in the better cafes of Coblenz, it was noticeable that few of them were drinking wines, the majority preferring coffee or the light Pilsener, which even the army authorities have approved as containing no more alcohol than the weakest system can assimilate.

Drunkenness a Rare Thing  
And Few A W O L From Barracks

Moreover, drunkenness is a crime which seldom appears on the character sheets of Coblenz troops. The writer did not see a single straggler trying vainly to find his way back to barracks or billet after hours, as is common to barrack towns in England and other European countries, and even in the other allied zones of occupation.

Just after the war there was plenty of heavy drinking in the Coblenz zone, but this has ceased. Those who refused to fall in line with the general improvement idea were gradually weeded out; there was no place in Major-General Henry T. Allen's army for any one who would not devote 100 per cent. of his efforts to showing that he was worthy of the name "American." For this has been the dominant idea of American occupation under General Allen—that the Germans should be given the incentive to adopt a higher ideal than that provided by their own former military powers, an incentive for better living, in which a gradual strengthening of relations would eventually outweigh the idea of oppression.

How well this has succeeded can readily be seen by the fact that in all Coblenz there are few who would not regret the departure of the American troops—with variant reasons which will be set forth later.

Probably one of the biggest influences in the development of the Rhineland spirit was the lesson taught to many officers and men when the mark began to slump. Hundreds had bought marks at the rate of fifty or sixty per dollar, with dreams of an easy future when normal exchange values returned. But when the German paper

dropped overnight to somewhere near 300 all ideas of speculation were abandoned, the banks were crowded with soldiers anxious to get their money back into good, crinkly greenbacks, or a solid dollar account with the American Express Company, which only recently established itself in the American zone at General Allen's personal invitation.

Few Tried to Even Losses  
By Buying Cheap Exchange

Some sold out at 230 to the dollar and might have recovered a few marks by buying the following day around 320, but the old adage of "once bitten twice shy" held true, and the Rhineland doughboy to-day doesn't worry where the exchange goes. He puts his money into something substantial—comforts for himself, gifts for his relatives, such as furlined coats or silk gowns for mother or sister, or jewelry for either the girl back home or the frau-in who may some day accompany him back to the land of liberty. For all these things can be obtained tremendously cheap in the Coblenz zone, and once bought are not subject to exchange fluctuations.

As for the cash balance—that is now usually held in dollars, and there are few of the rankers who haven't managed to put away a few hundred for the future, while the officers' messes of Coblenz probably could turn out a roll of bills that would startle the richest of the headquarters' messes "back home."

But, the reader will ask, how can this affect the comfort of the soldier himself? Therein lies one of the marvels of the American system of occupation, a story which is best told by a visit to any of the Coblenz barracks. At Andernach and Mayen most of the troops are in private billets, but Coblenz has always been a military town and barracks are to be found on all sides.

The German soldier, however, was taught to believe that the military life was necessarily a rough one, and the condition of the barracks rooms when turned over to American occupants showed conclusively that the lesson had been well taught. Filthy walls, no comfort, twenty or thirty men in a room now used by six or eight, no real sanitary appliances, messrooms badly ventilated and kitchens which fairly reeked with the odor of accumulated inches of grease, soot and food refuse on the walls and even in the food cabinets.

To-day all this has been changed and the glory of achievement does not belong to the American Government, but to the much maligned American soldier, who has been

willing to spend his money to create in these filthy surroundings a real home for himself. And, having created this home, he does not want to leave it until the necessity for all occupation of the Rhineland is over. To leave now and turn finely decorated barracks over to French or Belgian or English troops he feels would show a serious lack of understanding and a regrettable lack of cooperation on the part of Washington.

Each company tries to outdo its neighbor in the beautifying of its barrack rooms and the efficiency attained in kitchens and recreation rooms. One company the writer visited had papered all the walls with the most expensive wallpaper obtainable—with the dollar at 60 marks—and wooden wainscoting two or three feet high, built to cover the unsightly marks of drunken bouts between their German predecessors. Art shops all along the Rhine were ransacked to find suitable landscapes, in water colors and oils, and all framed in stained oak or gilt which would be admissible in any American home.

Some of the company's bedrooms even have carpets or rugs on the floors, and the majority have had hot and cold water appliances installed, with a series of real enamelled bathtubs to replace the out-of-date single stream showers which provided the German soldier's only attempt at bodily cleanliness.

Soldiers Pay for Extras  
In Meals and Other Comforts

Then there was a recreation room, large enough to accommodate seventy or eighty on nights when attractions in Coblenz were not interesting enough to draw them from the comfort of barracks life. In one corner an upright piano—its cost 15,000 marks—in another, one of the latest and largest phonographs (German make and costing almost as much as the piano). A real six-pocket pool table, with all the finest cues necessary for winter tournaments. Davenport, deep lounging chairs, settees—all richly padded and leather covered—in fact, very little different from a corner in one of the richest New York or Chicago clubs.

The adjoining company, instead of having papered walls, has merely stained half-way wainscoting and above this white enamelled walls and ceilings. But the necessary touch of color is given by an oval or rectangular oil painting, representing either some German castle or American building, such as the Capitol or Lincoln's birthplace, which has been painted on the wall itself by the ablest artists and decorators of the Rhineland.

## Germans Eager to Have Boys Remain Irrespective of Business Reasons, While Other Nations Are Anxious for Moral Aid

In the kitchens the old floors have been torn up and white tile floors installed, with glazed porcelain tiling reaching high enough to catch all the grease and smoke. Cupboards, designed by the cooks themselves and so arranged that not a speck of dust could get into the food even in a hurricane, have been built and covered with a washable white enamel.

The dining rooms are much the same as in the American barracks—long tables, but covered with real linen cloths and frequently with silver utensils. Glass dishes have been bought for the dessert courses, there are crystal butter dishes and cake platters, with finely painted Dresdenware baskets for fruit. And the floor is, like the kitchens, white tiled and immaculately clean.

"And how much of this did the Government pay for?" a mess sergeant was asked (no names are permissible, lest the War Office expense chiefs call for new Rhineland "sanctions" for undesirable criticism).

"The Government!" he replied, with a stare of amazement. "Good heavens, not a damn cent. We don't even ask them for labor with which to build our floors, but just dig down in our pockets and pay all the expense ourselves. It saves lots of time and we feel better when we've done something ourselves."

And this is the spirit which, according to the soldiers themselves, a lot of estimable old women are trying to crush by howling that the troops be taken back home and placed in uncomfortable barracks where initiative is invariably prevented by some awe inspiring but inconsiderate superior officer.

Food Served to Doughboys  
Would Cost Far More Here

And the food they eat in these barracks, well, it couldn't be provided in the United States for five times the Government's ration allowance to each soldier. Imagine any other army in the world eating this series of stomach fillers:

**BREAKFAST.**  
Fried eggs on toast, fried potatoes, hot milk toast, coffee.

**DINNER.**  
Beefsteak, brown gravy and plenty of bread, mashed potatoes, Brussels sprouts, lettuce salad, bean soup, egg custard pie, coffee.

**SUPPER.**  
Beef vegetable stew, fried potatoes, home made noodles, ginger bread, stewed prunes, tea and bread.

Some of it the Government pays for, but after a hard day's duty the average soldier could eat two Government rations, and to make up the deficiency he draws on his "dollar reserve" and the mess sergeant spends an hour finding bargains in the local German markets, where Brussels sprouts can be bought at less than one-fourth of a cent a pound, and when the troops want a bit of luxury a fat turkey or goose can be had for only 50 or 60 cents. "To give up this sort of soldiering, which is only a just compensation for the petty worries with which a soldier's life is filled and of which the outer world knows nothing, would be too much for me," another corporal declared. He wore a Distinguished Service Medal and the French Croix de Guerre, as well as the Victory ribbon with six stars, and there-

fore must have known what comprised these "petty worries."

"Put these men back in a company in the United States, where the spirit is altogether different, and I'll bet there wouldn't be 5 per cent of them reenlist for another three years."

Incidentally, later in the same afternoon THE NEW YORK HERALD's correspondent talked with a group of fifteen infantrymen whose terms of enlistment are due to expire about June, 1922. They have been warned that they probably will be among the first to go, so that their discharge can be facilitated on the other side of the Atlantic. Their solution of the problem was a prompt one—merely a visit to their adjutant's office, where they signed an agreement to enlist for another three years "on condition that they shall remain with the Rhine forces as long as Washington permits the United States to hold the Coblenz zone."

Those Who Will Remain  
Of Finest American Type

They received the assurance that they would not be deported, and within two hours the glad news had spread throughout Coblenz and every soldier with a clean record began preparing his papers for an early visit to headquarters. How this will affect the Washington order to reduce remains to be seen, but it is evident that the most rigid restrictions on reenlistments will have to be promulgated if the force is to be brought to the prescribed 7,000. But even this is beneficial to the American contingent, as those who do remain will be the finest types available and the most capable representatives of 100 per cent. Americanism.

Another point: If the above mentioned estimable old women have any fears that this brand of Americanism will be spoiled by contact with German women they need not worry. Much has been written and said about the intermarriage of American soldiers and German girls, even before the signing of peace with Germany. It has even been suggested that these marriages were merely an effort by Germany to introduce *Kaiserliche* propaganda into American homes.

THE NEW YORK HERALD is informed, however, that the marriage problem—at least so far as the Coblenz area is concerned—has been greatly exaggerated. Perhaps 700 marriages have been performed by the American army chaplains since the armistice, but few of these are allowed to remain in Coblenz. The surest way for a homesick soldier to get a quick journey to the United States is to marry a German girl; only in rare circumstances, such as the indispensability of the soldier for certain duties, is the couple allowed to remain in the military zone.

German Brides Are Shunned  
By Their Near Relatives

And those who do remain are just as American as could be wished. Shunned by a large proportion of the German population, even by their Chauvinistic relatives, these wives turn to their husbands' friends for a new friendship—and do not find it lacking. They rapidly adapt themselves to language difficulties, and, while they are not anxious to leave Coblenz as long as the dollar will buy a whole fist

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